



EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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news digest

93123D

Executive council receives first reports from diocesan visits, grapples with misconduct

During the recent meeting of the Episcopal Church's Executive Council, members of the council were confronted by a variety of problems that have captured the church's attention. "We have seen conflicts deepen and suffering increase in some of the most troubled lands: Liberia, the Sudan, Somalia, the Occupied Territories and, most certainly and visibly, in Bosnia," Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning reminded the 38 members of the council elected to carry out the mandates of the church between General Conventions. During his address from the chair, Browning said that, "wherever mass suffering exists....the church must articulate where God is in all of this and, in response, seek to understand our role in God's purposes."

During an afternoon session, Browning carefully explained the recent controversy over allegations of sexual abuse by Bishop Steven Plummer of Navajoland, outlining the steps taken in that case and arguing for a consistent policy. Admitting that the "situation in Navajoland is not completely resolved, it is still unfolding," Browning asked with obvious pain, "How do you bring healing and wholeness to the accuser and the accused? How do you redeem, out of all the pain, the moment of brokenness?" He said that it is often hard to keep that goal in mind. "We are learning but there is so much more to learn."

Senior executive for planning Barry Menuez reported that the visits by Executive Council members and national staff to the dioceses are going "extremely well." With over 62 dioceses completed, the visits have produced "such a mass of material that the committee will be working through the summer" to draft a report with recommendations for the November meeting of Executive Council. (Page 5)

93124D

Commission will propose canons to set national standards for disciplining clergy

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A subcommittee of the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons has released a draft of a proposal to revise Title IV of the canons--the section on "ecclesiastical discipline." In addition to proposals for across-the-board standards for disciplining clergy, it would also create a new position in every diocese: a church advocate, an independent "prosecuting attorney" who would investigate allegations and build a case for ecclesiastical trials.

The recommendations come at a time when two bishops and a bishop-elect have been accused of sexual misconduct, and a spate of other cases has caused the Church Insurance Company to restructure its coverage of liability for misconduct. (Page 8)

93125D

Communicators examine roles in a high-tech, multicultural world

A record number of Episcopal Communicators gathered for their 15th annual convention in New Orleans, June 9-12. They came not only to frolic in the French Quarter, but to explore the expanding complexity and vision of their role within the Episcopal Church.

Directed by group facilitator Maureen Connors of Washington, D.C., the 143 editors, writers, photographers and video producers from the local, diocesan and the national level explored new paradigms to "tell the story" in the next millennium, delved into personal and corporate vision statements, discussed technology, and held up new ways to report and connect in a multicultural world.

Many of the communicators agreed that they need to look to the future and grapple with their roles. They asked: Are we just describing the chaos, or are we looking for the truth? Are we hostages to the maintenance of the institution? As we look at the structure, are we asking if this is the way, the truth and the life? Are people at the fringes the ones who are going to present the model for the church? Am I the preserver or the truth teller? Throughout

the conference people struggled with these issues, whether informally discussing how to cover stories of sexual misconduct or dealing openly with how budget cuts dictate diocesan communications strategy. (Page 11)

93126D

Florida parishes in Hurricane Andrew's wake show signs of hope and renewal

Nine months after Hurricane Andrew slashed across Florida leaving thousands homeless and billions of dollars in damage, there is encouraging news from Episcopal churches in the areas of Florida that suffered the most. Most major repairs have been made, congregations are reforming and rebuilding, financial giving has not dropped drastically, and the outlook of rectors is predominantly positive.

The downside is hardly unexpected. Many church members are struggling through the trauma Andrew left, many people are hurting, some have relocated and left their parishes. In addition, negotiations with the Church Insurance Company and adjustors have delayed some of the major repair work. There is still a long way to go, but an informal survey of 11 churches in the Diocese of Southeast Florida proves that most are putting the hurricane behind and moving ahead.

"There's no gloom and doom," said the Rev. Gary Verell of St. Faith's Church in Miami, echoing the sentiment of many rectors of the parishes in the hurricane zone. "We're recovering, the neighborhood is recovering."
(Page 14)

93127D

PB's Fund board awards \$1.3 million in grants, revises major donor program

The board of directors of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief distributed more than \$1.3 million in grants to projects around the globe and revised guidelines for soliciting funds from major donors at its semiannual meeting, June 8-10, in New York City.

During the meeting, news reports of a grisly massacre in Liberia shook the world, and members of the board grappled with how to respond to the news. Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said that the Liberian crisis highlighted the ability of the fund to respond immediately to needs around the

world. "This is one of the most important functions in the life of this church," he said. The board authorized the use of up to \$50,000 in Liberia in response to specific requests.

The board also voted to revise its effort to solicit contributions from major donors. It adopted a resolution "that the Presiding Bishop's Fund continue a major donor effort by identifying special projects or focused areas of need" and that the presiding bishop offer recognition "in appropriate ways such as an annual dinner or an Anchor cross." Members of the board agreed that the major donor program should spotlight major projects rather than the major donors. (Page 16)

93128D

Episcopal Church Foundation supports innovative ministries in recent grants

Seven grants totaling \$90,000 recently awarded by the Episcopal Church Foundation will support innovative ministry initiatives that may serve as models for regional or national programs, according to officials of the foundation.

"It is evident in this funding cycle that the strongest proposals have the support of more than one group, including the diocese, congregations, and other religious and secular agencies," said Bruce Rinehart following the May 12-14 board meeting. Rinehart, a member of the foundation's board and chair of the grants review committee, said that the recipients of the grants represent new approaches of partnership in the sharing of leadership talent and broadening the base of financial support. (Page 18)

93123

Executive council receives first reports from diocesan visits, grapples with misconduct

by James Solheim

Like the blend of threatening thunderstorms and beautiful sunshine common to a Midwestern spring, the Executive Council heard a series of reports at its June 15-18 meeting in Minneapolis that brought both cheer and dismay.

Since the council's last meeting, "we have seen conflicts deepen and suffering increase in some of the most troubled lands: Liberia, the Sudan, Somalia, the Occupied Territories and, most certainly and visibly, in Bosnia," Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning reminded the 38 members of the council elected to carry out the mandates of the church between General Conventions. During his address from the chair (text in Newsfeatures section) he said that, "wherever mass suffering exists....the church must articulate where God is in all of this and, in response, seek to understand our role in God's purposes."

Contending that "there is nothing more important we can do in obedience to God than listen to our own lives," Browning posed two questions whose answers shape the personal and corporate lives of Christians: "Where is God in all this? Are we becoming more who God means us to become or less?"

Browning also said that, while "it is sometimes hard to make out the shadow of God's hand through the veil of tears, of this we are clear--God is present with those who suffer."

Sexual abuse a continuing problem

"Surely as we listen to our lives we know that we are being called to attend to the problem of sexual abuse in the church," Browning said. "I am not proud of the problems; I am proud of the way we are facing them," he added. "We are trying to make the church a place of safety, where vulnerability is a gift, though it may lead to the cross. We are trying to be open and we are trying to be honest."

During an afternoon session, Browning carefully explained the recent controversy over allegations of sexual abuse by Bishop Steven Plummer of Navajoland (see May 27 ENS), outlining the steps taken in that case and arguing for a consistent policy. Admitting that the "situation in Navajoland is

not completely resolved, it is still unfolding," Browning asked with obvious pain, "How do you bring healing and wholeness to the accuser and the accused? How do you redeem, out of all the pain, the moment of brokenness?" He said that it is often hard to keep that goal in mind. "We are learning but there is so much more to learn."

Later in the meeting, the Rev. Canon Margo Maris of Minnesota, co-chair of the church's committee on sexual exploitation, said that the church is developing a safety network to help people come forward. She said that cases involving clergy were particularly difficult because, in many cases, the faith of the victims was being destroyed. "We can't afford to lose these people by paying attention only to the needs of the clergy," Maris said in advocating tough policies in response to clergy misconduct. "I don't know who is going to believe in us if we allow this to happen among our leaders." She added that "we have made some progress in helping people believe that the church is addressing the issues."

Since misconduct is "a death, dying and healing experience--not a crisis management situation," Maris believes that the prognosis for healing is not very good unless the person is "very serious about wanting to get well," she observed. And she said it was a major concern to her that so many clergy wanted and expected to be restored to their ministry.

Maris also made a distinction between faith needs and fiscal needs, contending that there is "a big difference between the church's need to curb liability and our need to create a place where people can freely worship God."

Diocesan visits uncover both excitement and pain

Senior executive for planning Barry Menuet reported that the visits by Executive Council members and national staff to the dioceses are going "extremely well." With over 62 dioceses completed, the visits have produced "such a mass of material that the committee will be working through the summer" to draft a report with recommendations for the November meeting of Executive Council.

Employing a software program designed to organize and analyze the material around common themes, Menuet said it was already apparent that the "overriding message is deep appreciation by the dioceses," despite some strong criticism of the national program of the church.

Several council members reported on their visits. Joyce Austin of New York, for example, said that during her four diocesan visits she found an "absence of hostility" even when feelings ran strong on some issues. Participants also discovered, she noted, that they were listening to each other and bishops were able to take a reading of the mood of the diocese.

The last Executive Council meeting incorporated a Partners in Mission (PIM) Consultation, following diocesan visits by ecumenical partners from around the world. An action committee charged with "facilitating and monitoring" the PIM recommendations reminded the council that the consultation is "part of the long-range planning process of council," not an isolated event.

The committee urged council to include PIM in its report to General Convention. And the committee announced that it was inviting six young adults to join the next council meeting as a part of the listening process. "We still must learn how to tell our story," the committee said in underscoring the need for more communication.

Exposure to ministry in Minnesota

Executive Council members were given a quick exposure to the variety of ministries in the Diocese of Minnesota. While riding buses to Faribault, site of the first Episcopal cathedral in the United States, they heard presentations on the theme of "wellness." Minnesota has an international reputation as a "recovery center," with major institutions addressing drug and alcohol rehabilitation. The state also has widely renowned medical facilities, such as the Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

From Faribault the buses crossed the state to the Mississippi River valley and the Indian reservation at Prairie Island. Council members joined the congregation at Church of the Messiah for the dedication of a new parish center and then joined church and tribal leaders for dinner and a tour of the new casino.

In other action, the Executive Council

- approved the choice of a theme for the 71st General Convention in Indianapolis: "With water and the Holy Spirit, proclaiming one God, one family, one earth."

- adopted unanimously Philadelphia as the site for the 1997 General Convention.

- learned that a growing number of dioceses are not able to meet their financial commitments and there is a trend among others to establish their own formulas for contributions to the national budget.

- heard a report that 79 dioceses have responded to the askings for \$32 million with a pledge rate of 84.7 percent.

- voted to send five council members to the August symposium on church structure in St. Louis--Lloyd Casson, Peg Anderson, Don Wimberly,

Barry Menuez and Don Nickerson.

■ heard that the dioceses in Mexico have already registered with the government as the Anglican Church of Mexico and will present resolutions to General Convention asking for formal autonomy from the Episcopal Church.

93124

Commission will propose canons to set national standards for disciplining clergy

by Michael Barwell

As the Episcopal Church grapples with a series of lawsuits related to clergy misconduct, a commission of the church is urging new national standards for the discipline of clergy and a uniform court system to settle disputes.

A subcommittee of the Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons has released a draft of a proposal to revise Title IV of the canons--the section on "ecclesiastical discipline." In addition to proposals for across-the-board standards for disciplining clergy, it would also create a new position in every diocese: a church advocate, an independent "prosecuting attorney" who would investigate allegations and build a case for ecclesiastical trials.

"We are recommending a revision of Title IV to provide a fair, impartial, effective way in which to redress violations of our canons within the Episcopal Church...under a prescribed system of ecclesiastical jurisprudence which has not existed before," said Samuel Allen, vice-chair of the standing commission and chair of the Title IV subcommittee.

Allen, who spoke in an interview following the subcommittee's meeting in late May, said that the time is overdue to have a uniform system for clergy discipline throughout the church, rather than wide canonical and procedural variations from diocese to diocese. "There are no standards," Allen said. "It's currently whatever a local diocese wants to do."

Careful to prevent 'ecclesiastical McCarthyism'

"This revision is long overdue," said Suffragan Bishop Walter Dennis of New York who chairs the standing commission. "We hope it will ferret out people who engage in clergy misconduct such as sexual abuse, but at the same

time protect those people who are accused. We have to be careful of 'ecclesiastical McCarthyism,'" Dennis warned in an interview, noting that "people's reputations can be ruined" by accusations alone without chance of fair trial.

Dennis also said that "aside from church insurance issues, we need to revise these canons because there has been no revision to keep pace with current precepts of due process of law." Some of the disciplinary canons date from the 19th century, and "just evolved," Dennis said. "Everyone seems to be looking for a uniform code...and will be glad to see we're using a common set of rules."

The recommendations come at a time when two bishops and a bishop-elect have been accused of sexual misconduct, and a spate of other cases has caused the Church Insurance Company to restructure its coverage of liability for misconduct.

Proposed changes

Among the highlights of the recommendations:

- The new system will make it easier for a clergy person--including bishops--to be brought to presentment or trial for misconduct or violations of the canons. While diocesan standing committees will continue to decide if a trial is appropriate, parents of minor children, victims, vestries or bishops would be able to directly approach the standing committee to present charges.

- Clergy accused of misconduct could be temporarily inhibited from continuing their duties prior to presentment or trial. "The bishop must act quickly for the good order, discipline and reputation of the church," the interim report states. "Due process [for the accused] is followed by limiting the time a temporary inhibition would be in effect and by the requirement that the standing committee must, by majority, in advance, have approved the issuance of a temporary inhibition by a bishop."

- The revisions also propose a new canon "to provide a clear, fair and summary procedure...to allow a priest or deacon to voluntarily submit to discipline where there is no clear need to put in process a lengthy, cumbersome and expensive ecclesiastical trial."

- A "uniform and consistent" procedure for presentment--formally charging and bringing a clergy person to trial--is proposed by the subcommittee, allowing for "protection for both the accused and accuser." Diocesan standing committees become the sole issuer of a presentment. Procedures for presentment of a bishop "have been revised for clarity and practicality of use."

- Once a charge is made, a church advocate would act as prosecuting

attorney to investigate allegations and report back to the standing committee which then serves as a grand jury, deciding if the case should go to trial. Creation of the church advocate's role removes the bishop, diocesan chancellor and other church authorities from direct involvement in a case or church trial or subsequent appeals.

- Uniformity in diocesan trial courts is urged by the committee, establishing a court system that is elected by every diocesan convention and include both lay and clergy members.

- All trials would "conform to the spirit and procedural substance of designated Federal Rules of Civil Procedure for the U.S. District Courts." Federal rules of evidence will apply during trials.

- The "burden of proving a violation of the canons will be upon the church advocate by clear and convincing evidence," the report says. "Clear and convincing evidence," Allen explained, is less strict a standard than "evidence beyond a reasonable doubt" in criminal trials, but stricter than "mere preponderance of evidence."

New limitations of action

The subcommittee also proposes to reshape the "limitation of actions" for bringing charges against a clergy person. It proposes limiting claims to two years in cases not involving a crime or immorality. However, limitations currently fixed at five years will change, allowing claims to commence "within a period of time after the realization of harm and beyond the strict five-year limit."

The subcommittee said, for example, that presentment for sexually abusing a child would be limited to five years after the event, or until the child reaches age 23, unless it can be established to the satisfaction of the trial court that the victim was unaware of harm until a later date. The later date then would begin the five-year period of limitations. An absolute limit of 10 years would apply if there is no intervening disability such as status as a minor or incompetency, Allen explained.

A formal draft of the proposals to revise the canons will be presented to the House of Bishops meeting in Panama in September, Allen said. "This will be the first of many presentations of revised Title IV that members of the commission will make to persons and groups throughout the church before General Convention meets in Indianapolis."

—Michael Barwell is director of communication for the Diocese of Southern Ohio. [Editors note: The Standing Commission on Constitution and Canons has invited the comments and suggestions of all interested

persons and groups by writing to Samuel Allen, Esq., Suite 1400, 50 E. Rivercenter Blvd., Covington, KY 41011, or telephone (606) 581-6100.]

93125

Communicators examine roles in a high-tech, multicultural world

by Sarah Moore

A record number of Episcopal Communicators gathered for their 15th annual convention in New Orleans, June 9-12. They came not only to frolic in the French Quarter, but to explore the expanding complexity and vision of their role within the Episcopal Church.

Directed by group facilitator Maureen Connors of Washington, D.C., the 143 editors, writers, photographers and video producers from the local, diocesan and the national level explored new paradigms to "tell the story" in the next millennium, delved into personal and corporate vision statements, discussed technology, and held up new ways to report and connect in a multicultural world.

After watching a video on paradigm shifts, the group focused on the theme, "Communicating Possibilities, And All that Jazz," to discuss new ways to view and produce communication within the church.

Communicators told to 'be pioneers'

"People like you often have to be the pioneers--to determine what shifts you might have to be prepared for, rather than be the settlers--who wait to see what happens," Connors said.

Many of the communicators agreed that they need to look to the future and grapple with their roles. They asked: Are we just describing the chaos, or are we looking for the truth? Are we hostages to the maintenance of the institution? As we look at the structure, are we asking if this is the way, the truth and the life? Are people at the fringes the ones who are going to present the model for the church? Am I the preserver or the truth teller?

Throughout the conference people struggled with these issues, whether

informally discussing how to cover stories of sexual misconduct or dealing openly with how budget cuts dictate diocesan communications strategy.

A marketplace of ideas

In one session that included an exercise known as "the Village Marketplace" participants identified concerns they might face in the next few years. Breaking into self-selected interest groups, communicators discussed such issues as ethics, money and how to encourage ongoing dialogue on human sexuality. They asked if they perceived themselves as evangelists or reporters; whether Episcopal Communicators might initiate a coordinated national communications strategy in the church; how the church might put its prophetic voices on television, radio and in major newspapers and magazines.

One group discussed whether the Episcopal Communicators should become a lobby for communications in the church, ready to challenge those who try to curb their professional freedom. In an example of this idea, the organization distributed copies of *Communicating in Crisis*, a guideline for Episcopal Communicators on how to deal with communication strategy around cases of sexual misconduct. The booklet was edited by Michael Barwell (Diocese of Southern Ohio) and served as a follow-up to the convention in Berkeley, California, last year. A copy of the booklet will be sent to each diocesan bishop and chancellor.

Professional workshops were offered on postal concerns, design, photography, communication in a multicultural world, electronic media and video production. Presentations were made on *Episcopal Life*, Episcopal News Service and Quest, a computer communications network.

Communicators reviewed results of a survey of diocesan editors that showed a wide variety of expertise among editors. The survey was designed to help dioceses examine the effectiveness of communications as well as to give guidelines for structure and budget. Nearly half of the respondents to the survey are only part-time employees and almost 50 percent of the respondents are required to carry out non-communication/editorial work. Diocesan editors reported a wide range of financial compensation for their work--from \$2,500 for one part-time person, to \$52,000. The results also showed that dioceses vary widely in their communications budgets--from \$8,000 in one diocese to \$180,000 in another. An analysis of the full survey will be published at a later date.

Polly Bond awards highlight top work last year

Outstanding religious journalism efforts were recognized with the Episcopal Communicators annual Polly Bond Awards, named in honor of

former Episcopal communicator, the late Polly Bond of the Diocese of Ohio. A record 485 entries were received, according to chairperson Alix Dorr.

Winners of the coveted General Excellence awards for overall quality in print publications were:

- Newspaper, over 12,000 circulation: *The Episcopal News*, Diocese of Los Angeles, Ruth Nicaastro, editor;
- Newspaper, under 12,000 circulation: *The Record*, Diocese of Michigan, Herb Gunn, editor;
- Newspaper for Corporate Parish/Cathedral/Agency/Institution: *Episcopal Life*, Jerry Hames, editor;
- Magazine, Agency level: *The Witness*, Jeannie Wylie-Kellermann, editor;
- Magazine under 12,000 circulation: *The Nebraska Episcopalian*, Anne McConney, editor.

In electronic media, the top awards included:

- Live event, Agency level: "Values in Vocation," Trinity Church in New York, Linda Hanick, producer; Jeff Weber, executive producer; Charles Cesaretti, executive producer;
- Live event, Parish/Diocese: "The Ordination and Consecration of Jane Holmes Dixon," Dan Crossland, producer, Frances Antonucci Beard, executive producer, Cinny Kennard, narrator;
- Documentary, Agency level: "Listening to America: The Good Society," Episcopal TV and Radio Foundation, the Rev. Skip Schueddig, executive producer;
- Documentary, Audio: "Sunday at Six," Diocese of Connecticut, the Rev. Christopher Rose, producer;
- Documentary, Parish/Diocese: "Together," Diocese of New York, the Rev. Richard Anderson, producer.

At the close of the Polly Bond awards, Ruth Nicaastro, retiring after 19 years as editor and communications missionary in the Diocese of Los Angeles, was recognized by her peers with the Janette Pierce award of exceptional contribution to the ministry of communications, named for the former managing editor of the *Episcopalian* who died unexpectedly in 1988.

Elected for three year terms to the board of directors were Dan Crossland from the Diocese of Los Angeles, and Nanette Ross from the Diocese of Arizona.

—Sarah Moore is a freelance writer in the Diocese of Michigan. [Editors

note: a full list of Polly Bond award winners is available from ENS and will also be published and distributed in the next issue of the *Episcopal Communicator*.]

93126

Florida parishes in Hurricane Andrew's wake show signs of hope and renewal

by Andy Taylor

Nine months after Hurricane Andrew slashed across Florida leaving thousands homeless and billions of dollars in damage, there is encouraging news from Episcopal churches in the areas of Florida that suffered the most.

Most major repairs have been made, congregations are reforming and rebuilding, financial giving has not dropped drastically, and the outlook of rectors is predominantly positive.

"There's no gloom and doom," said the Rev. Gary Verell of St. Faith's Church in Miami, echoing the sentiment of many rectors of the parishes in the hurricane zone. "We're recovering, the neighborhood is recovering."

Putting the hurricane behind

The downside is hardly unexpected. Many church members are struggling through the trauma Andrew left, many people are hurting, some have relocated and left their parishes. In addition, negotiations with the Church Insurance Company and adjustors have delayed some of the major repair work. There is still a long way to go, but an informal survey of 11 churches in the Diocese of Southeast Florida proves that most are putting the hurricane behind and moving ahead.

For example, St. John's in Homestead which is located in one of the hardest-hit areas, suffered damages estimated at \$810,000. Most repairs have been completed, including new roofs for the church, parish hall, school and office building, and many new windows and internal repairs to the parish hall and school. The rector and his family are back in their home after living in a mobile home during extensive repairs.

The number of people in church on Sundays at St. John's dropped by

about 40 percent immediately after the storm, but is climbing back. The number of pledges dropped by nearly half, but total giving has remained nearly the same. "Fewer people are giving more," said the Rev. Terence Harris, rector of St. John's.

Sunday school attendance has been poor, but day school--which was the first school in Homestead to reopen following the hurricane--has 220 pupils compared with a pre-Andrew enrollment of 188.

"I'm encouraged by what the city is doing--the way it is trying to make Homestead a better place than it has ever been," Harris said. "Homestead has some obstacles, but I'm very optimistic for the community and the parish."

Do not 'dwell on the past'

At St. Matthew's in South Miami, property damage was \$270,000 including roof repairs for the church, offices, parish hall and the school. Some 80 trees were lost.

The Rev. Raymond Reid, Jr., rector of St. Matthew's, estimated that the parish lost 10-14 percent of its congregation. The impact is still felt from people who are rebuilding their homes before selling and leaving. "To me, these are things that happen in life and when they do, you keep going," Reid said. "The hurricane is behind us, we've got to move ahead and not dwell on the past, and that's what we're doing."

Despite the losses at St. Matthew's, there are new faces in attendance at Sunday services, and the church hopes to increase membership by 10-15 percent in 1993.

Caring for one another

At St. Thomas in South Miami, an estimated \$700,000 damage to the church preceded a 10-15 percent drop in attendance following the hurricane. "In a parish which had been experiencing a steady growth over the last 10 years...that's one of our biggest emotional struggles," said the Rev. Roger Tobin, rector at St. Thomas.

"Numerically, financially, emotionally, it will be a long time before all the wounds are healed--before we get back to where we were a year ago," Tobin added. "But I am convinced that the people who are hanging in will be stronger. I think we have learned what the true values are--caring for one another and working together."

—The Rev. Andy Taylor is editor of *The Net*, newspaper in the diocese of Southeast Florida. This article is excerpted from the May-June issue of *The Net*.

93127

PB's Fund board awards \$1.3 million in grants, revises major donor program

by Tracy Early

The board of directors of the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief distributed more than \$1.3 million in grants to projects around the globe and revised guidelines for soliciting funds from major donors at its semiannual meeting, June 8-10, in New York City.

During the meeting, news reports of a grisly massacre in Liberia shook the world, and members of the board grappled with how to respond to the news. Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning said that the Liberian crisis highlighted the ability of the fund to respond immediately to needs around the world. "This is one of the most important functions in the life of this church," he said. The board authorized the use of up to \$50,000 in Liberia in response to specific requests.

The PB's Fund, Browning said, not only serves the recipients of its grants, but it also provides a ministry to contributors by showing them that they can do something to alleviate the world's suffering. Supporting the fund enables people to move beyond the prevalent sense of helplessness in the face of the overwhelming challenges of the world's need, he said.

Grants support national and international projects

The grants awarded by the board included \$432,615 for relief, rehabilitation and development projects in the United States, and \$878,983 for similar projects in other countries. The board chose to make fewer grants and give larger sums where it seemed that the fund might be able to make a significant difference.

Among the larger grants were \$73,699 for electrical projects in Guatemala, \$50,000 for the ongoing Palestinian relief program of the Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, and \$40,000 for St. Catherine's Episcopal Child Development Center in the Diocese of Florida.

Grants were awarded to AIDS-related projects in the dioceses of Uganda, Honduras, New York and East Carolina. A program in the Diocese of West Missouri that supports families at-risk for child abuse and neglect received a grant for \$13,203. The board awarded a grant of \$12,500 to a project in the Diocese of Eau Claire to help American Indian youth overcome alcohol and drug abuse.

The board awarded \$22,800 for two projects in the dioceses of Louisiana and Western Louisiana for continuing relief from Hurricane Andrew. In addition, grants for \$60,172 for relief efforts from Hurricane Iniki were awarded to the Diocese of Hawaii.

In parts of the world where the PB's Fund has no direct channels of its own, it provides support for the relief work of the World Council of Churches or Church World Service (CWS), the relief arm of the National Council of Churches. The board voted to give CWS funds that had been designated by contributors for Somalia, Armenia and the former Yugoslavia.

Major donor program will spotlight projects, not donors

Members of the board participated in a reassessment of its "major donor" program aimed at developing a group of supporters who would give or raise \$10,000 or more a year for the fund. The Society of the Anchor was created in 1992 to recognize these contributors. However, some people in the church have raised objections to this program, contending that it carried an elitist aura inconsistent with the mission of the Episcopal Church.

The Rev. Henry Parsley, Jr., from Charlotte, North Carolina, who chairs the appeals and communications committee, presented a statement summarizing its reflections on the issue. Parsley said that members of the church have asked that the major donors program "not seem to separate major donors from the others" and that "fund-raising events and materials not be elaborate." The committee recommended "that the Presiding Bishop's Fund continue a major donor effort by identifying special projects or focused areas of need" and that the presiding bishop offer recognition "in appropriate ways such as an annual dinner or an Anchor cross."

However, any national event--such as Celebration '92, the one held in New York last spring--would "involve not just major donors but the broader church." The board adopted the committee's recommendation, but Browning said that he still favored an effort to reach major donors if it was done in a modest way.

The board also adopted a subsequent motion by the Rev. Charles Dobbs of Corpus Christi, Texas, that the major donor program spotlight major projects rather than the major donors. The board also requested that Parsley's committee bring a revamped major donor program design to the next meeting in November.

—Tracy Early is a freelance writer in New York City.

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Episcopal Church Foundation supports innovative ministries in recent grants

by Lynn Merwin

Seven grants totaling \$90,000 recently awarded by the Episcopal Church Foundation will support innovative ministry initiatives that may serve as models for regional or national programs, according to officials of the foundation.

"It is evident in this funding cycle that the strongest proposals have the support of more than one group, including the diocese, congregations, and other religious and secular agencies," said Bruce Rinehart following the May 12-14 board meeting. Rinehart, a member of the foundation's board and chair of the grants review committee, said that the recipients of the grants represent new approaches of partnership in the sharing of leadership talent and broadening the base of financial support.

For example, a program known as EZRA, a self-help community development effort co-sponsored by the Diocese of South Carolina and the South Carolina United Methodist Conference, received a \$15,000 grant from the foundation to support the start-up phase of its work.

Based in Charleston, EZRA plans to use religious judicatories as the vehicle to develop community-based ministries that work to improve the quality of life in communities located in the diocese. EZRA will organize churches and communities to identify and target areas for positive change, including the nurturing of leaders, improvement of existing programs, construction of housing and business by offering technical expertise on grant writing, fundraising and organizational matters.

Supporting special ministries

A \$15,000 grant will support a program in the Diocese of Los Angeles to strengthen Hispanic ministries. There are 4 million Hispanics living in the diocese, yet only 20 congregations out of 150 offer any kind of Hispanic ministry.

"Clearly there is an urgent need and compelling opportunity for training Hispanic lay leaders to reach out to those seeking spiritual guidance, pastoral care and the support systems a parish can offer the Hispanic community," said the Rev. Carmen Guerrero, project director and missionary for Hispanic ministry in the diocese.

The foundation grant will help train Hispanic lay leaders as pastoral assistants in those predominantly Spanish-speaking congregations that lack Spanish-speaking priests.

Looking for an improved way to elect bishops

A grant of \$16,680 to the Episcopal Election Leadership Project will address the election process of bishops for dioceses, how it affects nominees and families, and especially the clergy and laity of the electing diocese.

The initial phase of the project, co-sponsored by the National Network for Episcopal Clergy Associations and the Office of Pastoral Development of the House of Bishops, will encompass a two-year study of a sample of Episcopal dioceses in order to better understand and, if appropriate, simplify the election process for bishops and the dioceses.

"The study will largely focus on the systemic issues," said Bishop Harold Hopkins, Jr., executive director of the Office of Pastoral Development. "It will also take into careful consideration the polity of our church, which in some ways complicates the establishment of consistent national episcopal election processes."

Other grants

In addition, the foundation awarded grants to:

- Distance Learning Through Interactive TV, a project of the Board for Theological Education (\$13,500);
 - the Inner City Clinical Pastoral Education project in the Diocese of Southern Ohio (\$10,000);
 - the Atlanta Organizing Effort in the Diocese of Atlanta (\$14,000);
- and
- the Episcopal Evangelism Foundation (\$5,000).

Since its founding in 1949, the foundation has provided resources for strengthening the mission and ministry of the Episcopal Church. In addition to the grants program which allocated more than \$350,000 in 1992, the foundation also sponsors fellowships for doctoral students and is the primary supporter of the Cornerstone Project, a program dedicated to strengthening the ordained ministry of the Episcopal Church.

--Lynn Merwin is program associate at the Episcopal Church Foundation in New York City.



news briefs

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1996 Methodist General Conference going to Denver

The planning commission for the United Methodist Church's (UMC) 1996 General Conference decided unanimously on June 5 to hold the quadrennial meeting in Denver. "The UMC can make the strongest possible witness in behalf of the civil rights of all persons by holding the 1996 conference in Denver," announced a statement released by the planning committee. The 10-day conference is expected to attract nearly 1,000 voting delegates worldwide and about three times that number of observers and staff. Denver was chosen in late 1991 as the conference site by members of the 1989-92 Commission on the General Conference. About a year later, Colorado voters narrowly approved a constitutional amendment barring state and local governments from enacting laws protecting homosexuals from discrimination. Since that time the members of the 1993-96 commission have been pressured to move the event out of Colorado in protest.

Diocese of Taiwan ordains husband and wife

The Diocese of Taiwan marked two historic firsts on May 30 when it ordained Peter and Elizabeth Chen as deacons in a service held at St. John's Cathedral in Taipei. The Chens are the first married couple to be ordained in the diocese and Elizabeth Chen is the first woman ever admitted to holy orders there. The Chens have been active lay members of the Diocese of Taiwan and have received theological training at Trinity Hall, the diocese's own "seminary without walls." Peter Chen is a senior administrator in the Taiwan Railway Administration and Elizabeth works full-time as a diocesan volunteer.

Winners of sermon competition announced

The Episcopal Evangelism Foundation (EEF) recently announced the ten winners in its *1993 Best Sermon Competition*. Preachers of the winning sermons in the order of their selection were: The Rev. Margaret M. Bernhard, the Rev. Phyllis Taylor, the Rev. Robert H. Stucky, the Rev. Glenn

E. Busch, the Rev. Carolyn L. Davis, the Rev. Matthew R. Lincoln, the Rev. Julie Norton, the Rev. Wilifred S.N. Allen-Faiella, the Rev. W. Lee Shaw and the Rev. Julia Gatta. Every year EEF invites clergy and laity of the Episcopal Church to submit sermons that were especially helpful and well-received by their congregations. These sermons, as well as the sermons and addresses delivered at the 1993 Preaching Excellence Program held in June in St. Louis, will be included in *Sermons That Work: III* to be published by Forward Movement in the early fall.

Church World Service to resettle Haitians

Church World Service Immigration and Refugee Program (CWS/IRP) of the National Council of Churches (NCC) will resettle 30 to 40 of the HIV-positive Haitian refugees cleared for release on June 8 from Guantanamo Naval Station, Cuba. "We are pleased that through the ministry of Church World Service we are able to provide for those in the greatest need," said the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, General Secretary of the NCC. "The NCC's commitment to minister to the ill, to promote racial justice and to welcome the stranger come together in this ministry. Our compassion is really tested with the most stigmatized people. We must be compassionate," she said. CWS/IRP has resettled Cubans and Haitians under the Cuban-Haitian Primary Secondary Resettlement Program for more than a decade and since 1991 has resettled nearly half of the approximately 11,000 Haitian refugees who were processed through Guantanamo.

Religious leaders launch interfaith call for common good

Leaders of the National Council of Churches (NCC), the U.S. Catholic Conference and the Synagogue Council of America have called on their 100 million adherents to begin a dialogue on the "common good" aimed at overhauling the nation's social welfare system. The call was issued during a June 8-9 conference, *A Call to the Common Ground for the Common Good*. "This is the first major initiative involving the cooperation of Protestant, Orthodox, Roman Catholics and Jews since the 1966 desegregation of the public accommodations," the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the NCC, told the opening session of the two-day conference. The *Common Ground* project springs from a 1989 Ford Foundation review of the nation's social welfare needs and possible policy alternatives for the system as it moves into the next century. With financial support from the foundation, the three religious organizations are charged with developing a morally grounded debate around the welfare system.

Roman Catholics begin development of misconduct policy

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) announced the creation of a special committee charged with the development of a nationwide policy for investigating and preventing the sexual abuse of minors by priests. The committee, announced June 17 at a semiannual meeting of the NCCB, is composed of seven bishops who must draw up a plan for rooting out past and potential offenders, for providing care to victims and for preventing further misconduct. "I want to make sure that all of us bishops understand the depth and seriousness, the pain and the agony of this problem, and why it strikes at the very heart of the church's trust level and credibility," said Bishop John F. Kinney of Bismarck, North Dakota, head of the new committee.

Australian bishops address misconduct, women's ordination

In a recent national bishop's conference, Australia's Anglican bishops acknowledged that the church had to address the problem of sexual misconduct by clergy. The conference report stated that "there was the strongest expression of opinion that the bishops must be concerned for the victims and not just for offending clergy or for the church's image." The meeting, the first since Australia's first women priest's were ordained late last year, was "the most amicable participants could remember," noted Bishop Bruce Wilson of Bathurst. "A major contribution to the mood of relief and goodwill came precisely from those bishops who remain opposed to women's ordination," Wilson said. According to Wilson, 11 of the church's 24 dioceses have ordained women and there are now, in just six months, over 100 female priests in Australia.

WCC head visits Ecumenical Patriarchate

World Council of Churches' (WCC) General Secretary Konrad Raiser made his first official visit to Istanbul and the headquarters of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, May 7-11. In his greeting to Raiser, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomeos I pledged "unequivocal support of every WCC activity undertaken to promote Christian unity, to proclaim to the world the good news of the Gospel, to redress injustices, to serve humankind and alleviate suffering." In his reply, Raiser acknowledged the particular ecumenical contributions of Orthodox churches in "spirituality and liturgical life, reopening the sources of the patristic treasure, the theology of the Holy Trinity and the ecclesiology of communion." After the exchange of greetings, Raiser had a four-hour session with the patriarchate's standing committee for inter-Christian relations during which he discussed the Orthodox presence in

the WCC, relations with Roman Catholics and Protestants and involvement in Eastern Europe.

Computer chooses its own virgin

St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Van Wert, Ohio, sets up its worship folders on computer. They have created word processing templates for the Sunday bulletin, for weddings and for funerals. The funeral service template includes the name of the deceased at appropriate places in the liturgy and prayers. When a woman named Edna died, her funeral was conducted by the church. Since the previous funeral had been for a woman named Mary, the secretary used the search-and-replace function to substitute "Edna" for "Mary." But to the pastor's chagrin, when the congregation was invited to confess the Apostle's Creed, he saw the worship folder read: "Born of the Virgin Edna!"

Women's health consultation results in resource, network

The first ecumenical gathering centering on women's health issues, held May 20-21 and sponsored by the justice for women working group of the National Council of Churches (NCC), laid plans to publish a resource on women's health and to develop a network of religious leadership in this area. "Jesus' ministry was a healing ministry," said Ann Smith, director of the Episcopal Church's Office of Women in Mission and Ministry. "Through the resource book we hope to pick up where *Our Bodies, Our Selves* left off and include the spiritual component of health," Smith said. The group considered women's health as a window into the whole health field and discussed the need for churches to advocate wholeness and quality of life for the entire community. "We're talking not just about personal but social health," said Karen McLean Hessel, NCC program director of the justice for women group and organizer of the consultation. "One of the vital health issues for all people is access," she said. In light of this concern, the 52 women participating at the gathering expressed support for the Interreligious Health Care Access Campaign's working principles for assessing national health care legislation. "This is an issue that attracts and appeals to women of all denominations," Smith concluded. "The health issue is a rallying point for all women."

Carter endorses moderate Baptist group

Former President Jimmy Carter was keynote speaker at a recent meeting of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF), a group of moderate Southern Baptists who provide alternatives to the programs and policies of the Southern Baptist Convention. In a keynote address before 5,000 at the CBF in

Birmingham, Alabama, Carter, a deacon in his congregation in Plains, Georgia, said that he values his religious heritage as a Southern Baptist, but believes the 15-million-member denomination's bitter internal politics of the past several years has taken that heritage away from him. "In the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship my wife and I have found a home," Carter said. So far the CBF has not declared itself to be a separate denomination. A bitter struggle for control of the Southern Baptist Convention over such issues as biblical inerrancy and the ordination of women as ministers has buffeted the denomination for the past 14 years.

Vatican issues new rules on eucharistic sharing

A new *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, to be published by the Vatican this summer, will encourage local bishops to consider allowing limited sacramental sharing for couples in mixed marriages. The new document does not expand church laws on when a non-Catholic may receive the Eucharist. However, the norms emphasize the local bishop's authority to grant exceptions in very limited circumstances, including weddings.

Presbyterians on gay clergy: we need more study

The 205th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) voted to affirm the denomination's prohibition against the ordination of noncelibate lesbian and gay people to the ministry, but has approved a three-year study of homosexuality and the church. The motion requested that all churches and regional presbyteries look at sexuality as it relates to membership and the clergy. Church bodies were encouraged to allow homosexuals who have not made their sexuality public to participate in the study without fear of retribution. However, the resolution also affirmed as "authoritative" the church's current ban against homosexual clergy. The controversy heated up last year when the church's highest court revoked the appointment of a lesbian minister to a congregation in Rochester, New York. More than 30 resolutions about the ban on gay clergy were presented to the annual meeting.

Yeltsin apologizes for past oppression of religion

During a recent meeting of religious leaders with Boris Yeltsin in the Kremlin, the Russian president apologized for the antireligious actions and abuse of the Christian Church during the years of communist rule. At the meeting, Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy told Yeltsin that his church wants to live in peace with the government. Baptist leader Vasili Logvinenko expressed appreciation for Yeltsin's apology and signaled his support for the

Russian president's reform program. Leaders of Pentecostals, Adventists, Jewish groups and others were also present for the historic meeting.

Presbyterians give favorable nod to COCU

Delegates to the recent 205th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) have given preliminary consent to a proposal to create a "Church of Christ Uniting" presented by the Consultation on Church Union (COCU), a multilateral ecumenical conversation among eight Protestant denominations in the United States. According to the plan, churches would keep their own denominational structures and ordination processes but would create "covenanting councils" to promote church unity through shared liturgical services and ordination ceremonies in their local communities. Final approval by Presbyterians will require another affirmative vote by the General Assembly and individual presbyteries. The African Methodist Episcopal Church and the International Council of Community Churches have already approved the COCU plan. Other churches in the consultation are the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Episcopal Church, United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church. All of the eight denominations involved in COCU are scheduled to vote on the plan by 1998.

Roman Catholic bishop says scandals require repentance

Roman Catholic Bishop Raymond Lucker of New Ulm, Minnesota, said that the recent spate of scandals involving sexual misconduct by priests may force bishops to return to their role as servants. In an unusually strong critique of the hierarchy by one of its members, Lucker wrote in his diocesan newspaper, the *Prairie Catholic*, that church leaders have failed to accept the severity of sexual misconduct. "As a consequence, response from such leaders has looked like covering up, denial. Attempts at damage control have taken the form of manipulation of the press, resulting in lack of concern for families and parish communities," Lucker said. He called for a new era of repentance. "I believe this especially applies to bishops, who for so long have carried the trappings of feudal lords with all of their titles and dress and privileges that go along with it. It seems to me that we are being forced to recognize that we do not have much power, and that is all right."

People:

The Rev. Joe Morris Doss was elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of New Jersey on June 18. Doss, presently a rector at St. Mark's Church in Palo Alto, California, was elected on the third ballot. Doss has a law degree from Louisiana State University and is an expert on death penalty appeals. He has published in many law journals and has written a book, *Law and Morality*. Following consent by the church's standing committees and diocesan bishops, Doss will be consecrated bishop-coadjutor on September 19, and will become bishop of New Jersey when Bishop G.P. Mellick Belshaw retires. Belshaw has not yet announced his retirement.

The Rev. Claude E. Payne was elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Texas on June 18. Payne, rector of St. Martin's Church, Houston, Texas, was elected on the sixth ballot. Payne has served for 13 years as assistant to Bishop Scott Field Bailey when Bailey was secretary of the House of Bishops and has also chaired the grants committee for the Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief. Following consent of the church's standing committees and bishops, Payne will be consecrated in October and will eventually succeed Bishop Maurice Benitez when he retires. Benitez has not announced his plans to retire.

The Rev. James Malone Coleman was elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of West Tennessee on June 19. Coleman, rector of St. John's, Memphis, Tennessee, was elected on the 46th ballot. An initial convention, May 29, recessed after casting 35 ballots that failed to culminate in an election. Reconvening on June 19, the convention elected Coleman after 11 additional ballots. Coleman is a graduate of the University of Tennessee and the School of Theology of the University of the South. He has served in parishes in Tennessee and Louisiana, and served as chaplain at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Following the consent of the church's standing committees and bishops, Coleman will be consecrated in November and will become bishop of West Tennessee when Bishop Alex Dickson retires. Dickson has not announced his plans to retire.



news features

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Presiding bishop's remarks from the chair to Executive Council in Minneapolis

[The following are excerpts of the presiding bishop's address to members of the council on June 15, 1993.]

I want to begin by saying that I am delighted to be in Minnesota. My first visit here was in 1976 for the Minneapolis General Convention. At that Convention we took the historic vote on the ordination of women. Seventeen years ago. I have changed. You have changed. The church has changed. And now, just two weeks ago, Mary Adelia Mcleod was elected Bishop of Vermont, the first woman in the Episcopal church to be elected a diocesan bishop...

Minneapolis was not the site originally envisioned for the June 1993 meeting of the Executive Council. We had planned to meet in Haiti, but the very tragic and difficult conditions there have made that impossible. Two weeks ago I was in Haiti for the consecration of the bishop coadjutor, the Rt. Rev. Jean Zache Duracin, who is the ninth Bishop of Haiti and the second Haitian to be elected as bishop. He is strong in his faith, and that faith will be much needed in the face of the incredible poverty and political instability in his country. The church in Haiti is one of those bulwarks of faith, a beacon of hope in a dark landscape. They are our partners in proclaiming the gospel, and I ask that you remember Bishop Duracin and the people of Haiti in your prayers.

Those of you who have listened over the years, as Patti and I have, to Garrison Keillor know that, as we meet here in Minneapolis, we are in the vicinity of Lake Wobegon--the little town that time forgot. Though Lake Wobegon existed first only in the very creative imagination of a native

Minnesotan, the town and the people who live there have become as real to a large and faithful radio audience as the neighbors next door--and perhaps more real in these days when so many of us don't know our neighbors. Since 1974, Garrison Keillor, who could be called a humorist, or a writer but whom I know to be a theologian as well, has been on American Public radio sharing with us his observations of life in Lake Wobegon. This is the town where, as he tells it "the women are strong, the men are good looking, and all the children are above average."

Listening to our own lives

...Lake Wobegon may not be on the map. Even so it exists in the context of the experiences of all of us, in our commonality as we move along the road of our own lives. The appeal of Garrison Keillor is in his universality, in the gift he has for taking the particularity of the experience of one person and so describing it in its essence that we know it as our own experience as well. When we hear about Lake Wobegon, we learn something of our own lives. We listen to the stories, and we hear something of who we are too.

My friends, over these last years I have come to know that there is nothing more important we can do in obedience to God than listen to our own lives. God speaks to us in the daily. Our faithful response is to listen.

I want to share with you something from another of my favorite modern writer/theologians, Frederick Buechner. These are extracts from a book called *Listening to Your Life*.

Buechner writes: "I [have] discovered that if you really keep your eye peeled to it and your ears open, if you really pay attention to it, even...a limited and limiting life...open[s] up onto extraordinary vistas. Taking your children to school and kissing your wife goodbye. Eating lunch with a friend. Trying to do a decent day's work. Hearing the rain patter against the window. There is no event so commonplace but that God is present within it, always hidden, always leaving you room to recognize him or not to recognize him...If I were called upon to state a few words the essence of everything I was trying to say both as a novelist and as a preacher, it would be something like this: Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery that it is. In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness: touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it because in the last analysis, all moments are key moments and life itself is grace."

'Where is God?'

Buechner goes on to say that the reason God's words are almost

impossible to capture in human language is that they are ultimately always incarnate words. "They are words fleshed out in the everydayness no less than in the crises of our own experience."

"All moments are key moments and life itself is grace." That is enough to make us sit up and pay attention. To listen to our lives. And, as we do, I would like to pose what I believe are the operative questions we might ask ourselves while we are listening.

These questions are two, and simple they are. The first: "Where is God in all of this?" Where is God in pain, in joy, in disappointment and frustration? Where in those situations and twists of life that seem inexplicable? Where *is* God?

The second is equally simple: Are we becoming more who God means us to become, or less? This calls to mind the plumb line. And the Lord said to Amos: "See, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel." We are being measured, tested, judged and, as we attend to it, we receive a judgement of grace.

These two questions, though simply stated, are not simply answered. In fact, I am not so sure they get answered at all in any ordinary or straightforward way. Rather, we live them. And the answers that our lives give are tested within the community of prayer. We address these questions both individually and as a community. God moves through our individual lives but we don't stop with that personal relationship. That is a beginning, not an ending. The God of the Gospel challenges us to draw from our inner life, our private life, so we may live fully in, learn from, and serve in the outer world, the public sphere, God's world. We--you and I and the churches --have a great deal of work to do to reconnect the public and the private.

Parker Palmer, in a wonderful book called *The Company of Strangers: Christians and the Renewal of America's Public Life*, speaks to the role of the churches in making this reconnection. He notes that the concept of a public life has become distorted, is misunderstood and equated simply with politics and the activities of government. As he says: "Even if one believes that religion and politics don't mix, there is still strong reason to believe that Christians should concern themselves with public life. For the church preaches a vision of human unity which means very little if not acted out in the public realm. Surely that vision applies to more than family and friends. Surely it is a vision which claims more than the commonality of those who think and act and look alike. Surely that vision reaches out to include those who are alien, different, strange. If so, then the church *must* incarnate its vision in public, for there and only there is the stranger to be found."

Ripe with meaning

Parker goes on to say that "the churches of this country still possess the potential for the greatest power of all: the power to infuse life with meaning, or to articulate the meaning with which life is already ripe."

My conviction is that life is indeed ripe with meaning and we have had much to listen to, to make sense of, individually and as a community, in the four months since we left Mundelein. Beginning with the perspective of our world, we have seen conflicts deepen and suffering increase in some of the most troubled lands: Liberia, the Sudan, Somalia, the Occupied Territories. And on, and on. Most certainly, and visibly, in Bosnia.

The situation in Bosnia has been an agonizing spectacle played out nightly on our television sets. So appalled have I been by the atrocities that I issued a call to my counterparts in other denominations that we seek some common wisdom to share with the wider community. Bringing that together was difficult. Dialogue was agonizing, as we struggled to find agreement and bring the perspective of our Christian faith to that conflict. In the end, we issued a statement which moves us toward seeing humanitarian intervention as a reluctant, but legitimate, option.

As terrible as the situation in Bosnia, other areas of the world are equally distressed, even if not judged as newsworthy by those who select our daily burden of news. Liberia has known nothing but hardship, fear and death for three years. And the situation is worsening. The Sudan though less publicized than Somalia, is embroiled in war and devastated by hunger. So-called religion serves as a source of brutality rather than a mediator for peace. We must support in every way our church partners in these places of suffering and death in their work of reconciliation.

Striving for justice in the face of horror

Whether it is Haiti, Bosnia, the Middle East, Liberia, the Sudan, Zaire, Angola, Cambodia, Burma, East Timor, Tibet, South Africa or Los Angeles or wherever mass suffering exists, we are at a time when the church must articulate where God is in all of this, and in response, seek to understand our role in God's purposes.

The suffering we see is inhuman and cannot be ignored or talked away. We as a people of faith have a perspective to share with the family of nations as the international community grapples to define its role in a post cold war world. How are we to respect the dignity of all mortals and strive for justice and peace in the face of such horror? We are called to hold up a vision of the world as God would have it. We as a council, as a church, are standing next to the plumb line.

Though it is sometimes hard to make out the shadow of God's hand through the veil of tears, of this we are clear: God is present with those who suffer. And our own prayers are with the suffering, as well as our help in ways that seem, and are, pitifully limited.

As we listen to our lives, and look around us, it is plain that we must look for the connections among the issues of racism, economic injustice and environmental degradation. We struggle with these issues because we know God demands it of us so that we might participate in ushering in God's reign.

When we met last February, our nation had just welcomed a new President and the honeymoon was in progress. Well friends, that honeymoon is over. We are now witnessing an intense round of what I call the "politics of got-cha." *Got-cha! I'm right! You're wrong!* This game can be, and is, played by both political parties and, regrettably, is part of the institutional life of churches as well.

We are under the sway of the politics of *got-cha* when those holding differing points of view take on as their main work the dubious activity of making the other side look bad. When this happens there is a risk of losing sight of what our efforts are meant to point toward. Those in political life risk forgetting that what they are meant to care about is the common good and the general welfare. In the case of the church, those preoccupied with discrediting other points of view risk forgetting that we are meant to advance the mission of the church, bring souls to Christ and usher in the reign of God.

The real tragedy of such tactics is that both accuser and accused are diverted from what they are truly called to be. Everyone becomes less than they are called to be. And our mission suffers. Is this not sin?

In times of *got-cha*, appearance has more substance than reality. Looking good gets the prize and leadership means telling people what to do as if you had no doubt about it rather than allowing for ambiguity, and waiting on the Lord--rather than listening to the various voices, and weaving the rich and varied strands together.

Anglican heritage of comprehensiveness

I look to the Executive Council, as leaders in the Episcopal Church, you were elected by the church, even though they sometimes forget that, to be aware of these dynamics and name them for what they are. It is woefully off the mark for groups within the household of faith to attempt to promote their points of view by diminishing the points of view of others. I will not give examples, though several spring to mind. It is not the role of the presiding bishop to chide the over-zealous by name. It is the role of the presiding bishop to point to a dynamic prevalent today in our society, and around the

landscape of our church as well.

We--as leaders of the church--need to help the various constituencies within our body understand that what they espouse will be accepted, or not, based on its own merits. Forays into the politics of *got-cha* do not well serve the community of faith, and are certainly antithetical to our understanding of Anglican comprehensiveness.

Just a footnote about our Anglican heritage because it relates to my sense of where God is in all of this. As we look around our church, we know that many of our number are fairly new to the Episcopal Church and perhaps have not had an opportunity to learn what it means to be Episcopalians and inheritors of the Anglican tradition. We can attribute this to the happy news that our parishes are doing the work of the evangelists: inviting people to be part of our church community and to join with us in mission. Consequently, we have an enormous task educating those who become part of our household of faith about what richness they have in it. It is my deep sense that God is pressing us to recover the treasures of that heritage, to look with gratitude at what we have been given, such as our comprehensiveness, and to share it with others. In fact, this is one of the messages given us by the partners at the Partners in Mission Consultation when we were last together. Our consultation was a serious exercise in paying attention and asking how God is calling us. Our work proceeds through the PIM Continuation Committee and we will be hearing more about this later in the week.

Living in our comprehensiveness is a true way as we receive the gifts of ordained women. We are also living in our comprehensiveness when we accept that there are persons of good faith in our church who remain unconvinced of the theological rightness of the ordination of women. These hands that consecrated Barbara Harris, and Jane Dixon, and hopefully Mary Adelia, were also placed on the head of Jack Iker. And God was there in all of that.

Surely as we listen to our lives we know that we are being called to attend to the problem of sexual abuse in the church. We have a problem. That we know. We as a Council had to deal with it within the year. We will be talking about it again later today. Again and again I ask myself, where is God in all of this? Are we becoming more who God calls us to become? We are not meant to find words of answer. We are meant to *live* the questions. I believe we are living them.

The way of the cross is not easy

I am not proud of the problems. I am proud of the way we are facing them. We *are* facing them. We are trying to be open. We are trying to

make the church a place of safety--where vulnerability is a gift, though it may lead to the cross. We are trying to be open and we are trying to be honest. We are doing more as well. We are trying to educate ourselves, about boundaries, about what it means to be in a position of trust. We are trying to look closely at who we place in those positions. We are also trying to live as if we believe that where there is sin, there is also redemption. Where there is contrition and amendment of life, there is forgiveness and healing. It is not easy, but then we have no right to expect it to be easy. The way of the cross is not easy.

Over these last months many of you have done a lot of listening to the lives of dioceses as part of our planning process. I am enormously grateful to each and every one of you who have participated in these visits. You have made a tremendous gift of your time and energy--neither of which is limitless. It is my hope, and I would not be surprised if this is the case, that you have received a great deal as well. I know you have heard some affirmation, some harsh words too. We need to listen to both.

The learnings from these visits will be distilled over the next months, helping us to respond as a Council, and a church, such that we are partners in the ministry of the church. If we pay attention, truly listen, as I have no doubt we will, it will not be business as usual. Our budgets won't look the same. Our programs won't look the same. When we next meet, in Hartford in November, we will have in draft form program and budget recommendations which reflect our active listening. I pray they will reflect as well our asking: Where is God in all of this? Are we becoming, individually and as a community, more who God intends us to become?

We do not have the answers. We are living the questions, and we live them in the midst of grace upon grace upon grace. God's grace is with us. God's spirit is upon us. Let us live in accordance with that knowledge. And, let us listen to our lives. "...All moments are key moments, and life itself is grace."

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Innovative congregational program touches lives of thousands

by Joe Romano

For Ellen Campbell of Juneau, Alaska, a creative ministry has provided the answer to a search that began when she was a young girl. Although she was interested and active in the church all her life, Campbell said that she had always wanted to better know and love Jesus Christ. "I've been to church all my life," she said, "but my relationship with Jesus was always one based more on fear." Now, Campbell said, she has learned "to love him."

Campbell's new insight was the result of a program known as the Disciples of Christ in Community program (DOCC), a congregation-centered ministry created nearly two decades ago in a New Orleans parish that has brought a similar "life-changing experience" to thousands of people in 26 states.

The original intent of the program was to promote interaction among the members of the congregation at Trinity Episcopal Church in New Orleans. The Rev. John Stone Jenkins, the rector who developed the program in 1975, began by inviting his parishioners to look at the Gospels, examine the life of Jesus on earth and relate that to their own lives.

From the outset, Jenkins' goal was to create a program that would enhance the spiritual life of his congregation. Each week, parishioners met in small groups. An opening lecture was followed by a discussion. People shared feelings, stories and experiences in coming to understand Christ's life. It also helped them to feel more a part of the congregation. Pleased with the early success of his work, Jenkins eventually added components offering New and Old Testament teachings and listening skills.

Moved to Sewanee

Over the years, Jenkins offered his growing program to other churches in the southeast. DOCC became so popular that the administrative demands outgrew Trinity Church. Following a year and a half of discussions and negotiations, Trinity Church gave the program to the Extension Center at the School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee in 1989. Today, the program continues to employ the model that Jenkins established.

Karen Keele, who directs the DOCC program in the Extension Center at Sewanee, said that one of the reasons the program has such an impact on

individuals and churches is its ability to be tailored to the group using it. Guidelines are fairly relaxed, she said. "We recommend that they use our syllabus and adapt and adjust it to their needs. If you don't need a certain chapter, leave it out. Do this the way that suits you best. It's really their program," she said.

No matter how the program is altered, Keele said it always can help bring a congregation closer together. "People often experience a deeper spiritual life, develop a greater commitment to Jesus Christ and accept a challenge to exercise a ministry within the church and beyond."

Small-group discussions are key

Campbell remembers reading a one-sentence description of DOCC and thinking, "This is what I've been looking for." She said that she enjoyed the program so much that she repeated its first year program four times. "It (DOCC) so deals with our essence: love, forgiveness, grace and community. We have learned that God created us in love and that gives us worth. That is what gives us the significance that people struggle for. Being a part of the body of Jesus Christ is the biggest 'trip' of all," said Campbell. "DOCC has blessed my life greatly. I have come to know Jesus and that is what I always wanted."

The key to the program's success appears to be its use of small group discussions which provide a natural opportunity for parishioners to build community. The Rev. Harold Warren, rector of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Lake Wales, Florida, said that DOCC had a profound influence in his parish. "I was surprised how well it has been received. We are a traditional, conservative church with a history that doesn't include lots of small group participation.

"We had tried other programs, and they were all pretty short-lived and not very successful," Warren said. He said that 54 people completed the program the first year it was offered in his parish. He had expected something fewer than 15. The results, he said, were dramatic and widespread. "There was a lot of energy and enthusiasm. I could see the positive impact it had on our worship," said Warren. The program's second year, during which an advanced course was added, proved to be equally impressive in numbers of participants and continued to affect the life of the parish.

Warren said that the community building is a key part of the program. An increasing sense of loneliness and isolation among people today has created what he calls a desperate need for intimacy. "But people are often frightened by that. DOCC meets such a profound need that people are committed to it," he said.

A powerful healing experience

Patricia Howe of St. Andrews-on-the-Sound Church in Wilmington, North Carolina, said that she first became acquainted with DOCC as a member of a parish search committee. The finalist for the church rectorship told the committee he would come if the parish would agree to do the DOCC program. They agreed and the results were "extremely successful," according to Howe.

"Members of the small groups really enjoyed each other, and because of that enthusiasm we had a very good year," Howe said. "I can't rave enough about the program. It builds community like nothing else I have ever seen," she added. Since that first year, Howe has continued to be involved with DOCC, even traveling to train facilitators in other parishes. "That is a marvelous experience of renewal," she said, "to go to different places and share the joy of the program."

At Trinity Church in Buffalo, New York, Peter Curtis said that working with DOCC helped make Christianity real for him. "It gives me an opportunity to make it an everyday experience--more than something I just do on Sunday mornings. DOCC has been a very powerful healing experience. Both in personal and work relationships, it has provided assets that I would not have had and allowed some important healing in my life," said Curtis, who is a member of the church.

Since moving to Sewanee, the 21-week DOCC course has been revised and follow-up programs ranging from 15-30 weeks can be offered. Second-level programs explore the Book of Acts, the Old Testament, author Flannery O'Connor and the Parables of the Kingdom, C.S. Lewis and his conversion to Christianity, and "looking for life in the midst of death." Keele said the program has also spread to congregations outside of the Episcopal Church and has been modified for use in prison settings. The program also has been used successfully at parishes in the Caribbean.

--Joe Romano is director of Media Relations at the University of the South.



reviews and resources

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World survey of refugees available from USCR

The United States Committee for Refugees (USCR) recently released its annual *1993 World Refugee Survey*, revealing that in spite of the end of the Cold War and the massive repatriation of Afghans and Cambodians in 1992, the world refugee population has continued to grow. The USCR report estimated that in 1992 the world refugee population rose to 17.5 million, including some 3 million new refugees. Similarly, the number of internally displaced persons grew to 25 million. Protracted conflict in the former Yugoslavia, the republics of the former Soviet Union, Mozambique, Burma and Somalia is cited as the root cause of the major new migrations of refugees in 1992. The *1993 World Refugee Survey* contains up-to-date reports on the conditions in more than 20 countries, a directory of organizations active in refugee affairs and a series of articles on refugee protection. The *Survey* is available from USCR for \$10 per copy, plus \$3 postage and handling. To order, write USCR, 1025 Vermont Avenue, N.W., Suite 920, Washington, D.C. 20005; telephone (202) 347-3507, fax (202) 347-3418.

1993 report on hunger available from Bread for the World

The third annual report on the state of world hunger, *Hunger 1993, Uprooted People*, is now available from the Bread for the World Institute on Hunger and Development. The report includes essays on the theme of hunger among displaced peoples, updates on hunger in all parts of the world, glossaries, tables and a revised bibliography. According to editor Marc J. Cohen in his introduction "Up until now, the world's policy makers have not put solutions to the hunger crisis of uprooted people high on their agendas. They will only do this if people of good will around the world engage themselves in efforts to end hunger." The cost of this resource is \$12.95. To order, or for more information, write to Bread for the World Institute, 802

Rhode Island Avenue, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20018; telephone (202) 269-0200.

Photos available in this issue of ENS:

1. Browning dedicates new parish hall on reservation (93123)
2. Nicastro receives honor at Communicators meeting (93125)

Tentative mailing dates for future ENS releases are July 26 and August 18.